

## IRELAND IN THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES, 1899-1999

*Editor: Wayne K. Chapman*

**T**he *South Carolina Review* occasionally dedicates an issue to a theme, subject, or method distinctive from that of its usual diet of short fiction, lyric poetry, and literary criticism—the very best, indeed, from a literally vast number of unsolicited manuscripts read by the journal’s editors during the nine months of the academic calendar. This issue draws particular distinction from the Tenth Annual Southern Regional Meeting of the American Conference for Irish Studies (ACIS), hosted by Clemson University in February 1999, organized by yours truly, and assisted by a number of transplanted hibernians and hibernophiles whose families have settled in the Upstate region of South Carolina. It is beyond my purpose to recall the events of the conference—although its featured poet, Rita Ann Higgins, gives a catalogue of topics in her hilarious valedictory poem “The Clemson Experience”—and let it be noted that this commemorative issue of the *Review* is not a proceedings in the usual sense. This theme-based number was partly sired by an unspent grant to the conference and therefore is indebted to the College of Architecture, Arts, and Humanities. However, the high spirit and often equally high quality of the presentations have been inspiring in the making of this last issue of the century. Hence, something of the conference’s focus on a century of renaissance in Irish arts and letters is preserved here. Let those who were there know which bits have derived from the event and which have been obtained as enhancements.

That said, it must be acknowledged that the salient pieces in this number do represent the plenary events of the conference: first, Rita Ann Higgins’ public reading and, last (but next in the issue), the essays of Professors Alma Bennett, Ronald Schuchard, and Michael J. Sidnell, who lectured before the closing finale, a staged reading of Yeats’s play *The Countess Cathleen* in recognition of its first controversial production at the inaugural of the Irish Literary Theatre in 1899. Partially to remind one of the diverse heritage of the American scholars who belong to the Southern ACIS but also to reconcile Irish matter to the idiom of most issues of *The South Carolina Review*, I’ve interspersed quite a few poems that do not necessarily speak with an Irish inflection. In the spring number, the editors will return to the tradition of the *Review* as a “little magazine” with a “Southern” accent.